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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 31 March 1999, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. DONIGI (Papua New Guinea)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/AC.109/1999/L.2/Add.1 and A/AC.109/1999/CRP.1)

2. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to documents A/AC.109/1999/L.2/Add.1 and A/AC.109/1999/CRP.1. At the previous meeting, the Acting Chairman had submitted a paper in which he had suggested that, in the near future, the Special Committee should carry out a critical review of its work and draw up a plan of its future activities. That paper was annexed to document A/AC.109/L.1886. Three informal meetings had been convened in order to solicit the views of delegations on that paper. Three non-papers had been submitted by the Chairman, and another by the representative of Chile. As a result of the extensive exchange of views, a work programme had been prepared and issued as document A/AC.109/L.2/Add.1.

3. Ms. MALDONADO (Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services) read out some minor editorial changes to the document. On page 1, under item 2, third column, "Saint Lucia to host" was a separate element which should be on the same line as the word "venue". In the second column, "25-27 May 1999" should be aligned with item 2.

4. Mr. SPIRIN (Russian Federation) said that his delegation had already expressed its views on the work programme at the previous meeting. Proposals should be prepared on the basis of two criteria: they must be consistent with the Committee's mandate and must be feasible. Several proposals seemed to have substantial financial implications without really having significant outcomes. In his view, some activities were hardly supportive of decolonization. The Secretariat should indicate whether additional resources were needed; since activities should be financed within the limits of available resources.

5. The CHAIRMAN said that the work programme covered 1999 and did not concern activities for the following year. As agreed during the informal consultations, the General Assembly had already approved the bulk of the work programme, and it therefore could not be amended. The Committee would have to consider item 3, relating to the critical review, in informal consultations throughout 1999 in order to come up with a common strategy for discussing those various issues with the administering Powers. However, the comment of the representative of the Russian Federation had been duly noted.

6. Mr. NATALEGAWA (Indonesia) reiterated the position taken by his delegation during the informal consultations on item 3 of the work programme. While he endorsed most of the activities in the programme, he wished to stress the need for the Committee to take into account the special circumstances of each Territory in implementing its work programme. His delegation's views on other elements of the work programme, especially one of the subparagraphs of item 6, were well known and did not need to be repeated.

7. Mr. EGUIGUREN (Chile), referring to the statement by the representative of the Russian Federation, asked whether some of the elements of item 3 of the work programme, especially subparagraphs (d), (e), (f) and (g), were suggestions or topics to be considered by the Committee at the appropriate time. Once the necessary clarification had been given, there should not be any major problems. It was up to the Chairman to decide when those topics would be considered.

8. The CHAIRMAN said that the topics listed under item 3 concerned future activities to be considered by the Committee when it took up its work programme and objectives. Subparagraphs (d) to (g) related to matters that had been highlighted in the previous year's report of the Acting Chairman as warranting a critical review by the Committee. No date had yet been set for the consideration of those topics, but the Committee would have to address each of them during the year in informal consultations in order to decide, among other things, whether they were relevant and to establish criteria for their implementation, including dealing with the problems of financing and costs raised by the representative of the Russian Federation.

9. Mr. TANOH-BOUTCHOUÉ (Côte d'Ivoire) asked for clarification of the purpose of the meeting. At its previous meeting, the Committee had decided to consider its work methods, define its objectives and agree on the contentious issues before meeting the administering Powers. He wondered whether the purpose of the current meeting was to discuss the Committee's methods of work and noted that the large number of items on the work programme would make it difficult to deal with all of them.

10. The CHAIRMAN, acknowledging that there were many items on the agenda, said that most of them concerned activities already initiated. The Acting Chairman's report of the previous year had requested a review of those activities in order to determine whether they were still relevant. The representative of Côte d'Ivoire was right to have raised the issue of objectives. The Committee would deal with them under item 3 (a) of the work programme in informal consultations before holding the dialogue with the administering Powers referred to in item 3 (d). While some of the topics included in item 3 were new and had been proposed by the Chilean delegation in a document submitted during the informal consultations, the bulk of them were based on the report of the Acting Chairman.

11. Mr. TANOH-BOUTCHOUÉ (Côte d'Ivoire) asked whether the Committee would consider each item in order to determine whether members agreed on the principles and shared a common view before meeting the administering Powers.

12. The CHAIRMAN said that the current meeting was a formal one whose agenda had already been adopted. The Committee would adopt the work programme and consider the seminar programme for the year and other matters. The debate on the consideration of the objectives and mandate of the Committee would continue during an informal meeting that he planned to convene as soon as the current meeting adjourned.

13. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should adopt the work programme contained in document A/AC.109/1999/L.2/Add.1, as orally amended by the Secretariat.

14. It was so decided.

CARIBBEAN REGIONAL SEMINAR (DRAFT GUIDELINES AND RULES OF PROCEDURE) (A/AC.109/1999/2)

15. The CHAIRMAN thanked the Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia for his efforts to ensure that the 1999 seminar of the Special Committee would be hosted by his country.

16. Ms. JOSEPH (Saint Lucia) welcomed the fact that the Committee had established the agenda. That document, which organizers of the seminar had been eagerly awaiting, would help to speed up the preparations.

17. The CHAIRMAN announced that the seminar would be held from 25 to 27 May 1999 in Castries, Saint Lucia. The aforementioned dates had been confirmed by the host country.

Draft guidelines and rules of procedure (A/AC.109/1999/2)

18. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the text of the draft guidelines and rules of procedure and suggested that the Committee should adopt it.

19. It was so decided.

Composition of the delegation of the Special Committee

20. The CHAIRMAN said that in accordance with the financial provisions, the Special Committee would be represented by six members, including the Chairman. He suggested that members of the Bureau should hold the necessary consultations with members of their respective regional groups and that the Chairman should be authorized to decide on the composition of the delegation after consulting the members of the Bureau.

21. It was so decided.

List of invitees

22. The CHAIRMAN read out the list of invitees, which included administering Powers and representatives of other Governments (whose participation would not be funded by the Committee) and elected officials of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (one official from each Territory would be funded by the Committee). He suggested sending invitations to the following regional organizations: the Caribbean Community, the Association of South-East Asian Nations, the South Pacific Forum and the Organization of American States. He recommended that the Special Committee should provide funding for the participation of five non-governmental organizations from the Non-Self-Governing Territories. He also suggested that the Committee should authorize its Bureau to decide on funding the travel of those non-governmental organizations and on inviting other

non-governmental organizations from the region to participate in the seminar at their own expense. With regard to experts whose participation would also be funded by the Special Committee, he recommended that the Bureau should be authorized to invite five experts from the region. All United Nations bodies would also be invited to participate in the seminar.

23. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should proceed accordingly.

24. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

25. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the 1999 Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories Fighting for Freedom, Independence and Human Rights should be observed in Saint Lucia, since the Special Committee would hold its seminar in that country from 25 to 27 May.

26. It was so decided.

27. Mr. DAUSÁ CÉSPEDES (Cuba) welcomed the fact that the Week of Solidarity would be observed in Saint Lucia within the framework of the Special Committee's seminar. However, it would be a good idea to organize parallel events at Headquarters in New York to observe that week, or at least to issue a statement that would be widely disseminated.

28. Mr. STANISLAUS (Grenada), Mr. TANOH-BOUTCHOUÉ (Côte d'Ivoire) and Mr. RABUKA (Fiji) supported the Cuban delegation's proposal, stressing that organizing a parallel event at Headquarters was particularly important since it would allow those who would be unable to go to Saint Lucia to participate. The Week of Solidarity afforded an excellent opportunity to promote the Committee's activities and focus on the problem of decolonization.

29. The CHAIRMAN asked for suggestions for the observance of the Week of Solidarity at Headquarters. For example, the President of the General Assembly could make a statement on that occasion.

30. Mr. DAUSÁ CÉSPEDES (Cuba) endorsed that suggestion and said that the Chairman of the Special Committee could also have a statement read on his behalf. Delegations should be given time to ponder over the most rational and effective way of observing the Week at Headquarters in view of the fact that the Chairman and several members of the Special Committee would be in Saint Lucia.

31. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should authorize him to hold consultations with other members of the Bureau in order to come up with a solution which would be communicated to the Committee.

32. It was so decided.

33. Mr. OVIA (Papua New Guinea) asked whether the white paper distributed by the United Kingdom delegation would be considered by the Special Committee as part of the critical review of its work with a view to preparing for the dialogue with the administering Powers.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that he intended to convene an informal meeting as soon as the current meeting adjourned in order to consider that issue and conference room paper A/AC.109/1999/CRP.1.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.